

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----108474 211732Z /41
O 211709Z FEB 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9439
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 USNATO 01764

EXDIS

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, EEC
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS WITH NATO ALLIES

REF: STATE 38167

SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

SENIOR EUR OFFICIALS KNOW AS WELL AS WE "HOW TO CONSULT WITH ALLIES" AND WHY AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE IS IMPORTANT IN UNDERSTANDING THE REASON FOR EACH LIMITED CONSULTATIVE GROUPING AND THE GENERAL PATTERN OF NATO AND EC CONSULTATIONS. WE HAVE REPORTED IN DETAIL ON RECENT CONCERNS OF ALLIES EXCLUDED ON SOME ISSUES AND HOW WE BELIEVE THESE CONCERNS SHOULD BE MET.

A POINT WE WANT TO EMPHASIZE IN THIS CABLE IS THAT AD HOC DECISIONS ON HOW TO CONSULT ON INDIVIDUAL ISSUES HAVE AN IMPACT ON EVOLVING INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH OUR EC AND NATO ALLIES. THIS IMPACT, AND CONCERNS OF SMALLER ALLIES, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN EACH INSTANCE, ALONG WITH QUESTIONS OF WHICH FORUM IS CONFIDENTIAL

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THE MOST EFFECTIVE. IF EFFICACY AND FACILITY WERE THE ONLY CRITERIA, RESTRICTED GROUPS WOULD ALMOST ALWAYS BE CHOSEN. WE CAN ALWAYS HAVE A BETTER DISCUSSION WITH FEWER AND WITH THOSE WHO COUNT ON EACH ISSUE, AND WE SHOULD NOT DISCOUNT THE ATTRACTION OF EXCLUSIVITY. BUT THERE ARE OTHER FACTORS IN PLAY.
ANY STUDY OF THESE ISSUES AIMS AT A MOVING TARGET. WE THINK

IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO PIN DOWN THE PRECISE VALUE AND LIMITS OF RESTRICTED GROUPINGS, WHICH CHANGE TEXTURE AND FUNCTION WITH THE RISE AND FALL OF PERSONNEL AND ISSUES. MOREOVER, EC ENLARGEMENT AND CHANGES IN ALLIED GOVERNMENTS MAY RAISE NEW REQUIREMENTS. WE THINK IT WOULD BE USEFUL, HOWEVER, TO TRY, MORE THAN IN THE PAST, TO ENSURE THAT THE INTERESTS OF SMALLER ALLIES ARE CONSIDERED, WHENEVER THE QUESTION OF RESTRICTED GROUPS IS POSED. WE SUGGEST SOME GUIDELINES TO THIS END.

IN THE SECURITY AREA, IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE CONCERNS OF SMALLER ALLIES HAVE SHARPENED OVER THE PAST YEAR BECAUSE PERCEIVED STRATEGIC CHANGES HAVE LED TO A HEIGHTENED DESIRE ON THE PART OF ALLIES TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN ARMS CONTROL CONSULTATIONS, PARTICULARLY ON SALT ISSUES. PUBLIC DEBATE HAS HELPED SPARK A QUALITATIVE CHANGE IN THE NATURE OF DESIRED CONSULTATIONS--AND SO FAR THE SMALLER ALLIES HAVE FELT LEFT OUT. THESE CONCERNS ARE CLEARLY MOST INTENSE ON CENTRAL EUROPEAN SECURITY ISSUES. THEY ARE LESS INTENSE, AND AT TIMES NON EXISTENT, REGARDING RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS ON SUCH ISSUES AS AFRICA AND NON-PROLIFERATION.

AS POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE NINE HAVE DEVELOPED SMALLER NON-EC MEMBERS HAVE FELT EXCLUDED FROM THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS WHEN POSITIONS OF THE NINE ON CONFIDENTIAL

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EAST-WEST ISSUES ARE PRESENTED AS FINAL DECISIONS.

INCREASED RECOURSE TO ECONOMIC SUMMITRY AMONG MAJOR POWERS HAS ALSO RAISED CONCERNS AMONG THOSE EXCLUDED.

US DECLATORY COMMITMENTS TO NATO CONSULTATIONS ARE QUESTIONED WHEN WE FOLLOW-UP IN RESTRICTED GROUPS.

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IF THE ALLIANCE IS TO PROSPER IT MUST PROVIDE EVEN THE SMALLEST ALLY A SENSE OF MUTUALITY, A FEELING THAT ITS STRENGTH IS ENHANCED BY THE FACT THAT THE ALLIES WORK TOGETHER. THIS FEELING OF SOLIDARITY IS UNDERMINED BY CONSULTATIONS INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE ALLIANCE WHICH ARE PERCEIVED AS EXCLUDING ALLIES WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE THEIR INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE.

THESE CONCERNS DO NOT UNDERCUT THE NEED FOR RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS. BUT THEY SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT ESPECIALLY BY THE US, WHICH SETS THE

STANDARDS AND PROVIDES THE LEADERSHIP IN THE ALLIANCE.

AS TO STRUCTURAL INNOVATIONS, OUR REVIEW OF EXISTING PRACTICES WITH REGARD TO NATO AND THE EC DO NOT SUGGEST TO US A NEED TO CHANGE PRESENT PATTERNS OF CONSULTATION, EXCEPT PERHAPS TO TRY TO OVERCOME COMPARTMENTALIZATION IN THE FIELDS OF DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC PLANNING. END SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----108509 211737Z /41

O 211709Z FEB 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9440
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 04 USNATO 01764

EXDIS

A. RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS:

1. DESPITE THE SOLID RECORD OF US CONSULTATIONS AT NATO OVER THE PAST YEAR SMALLER ALLIES HAVE EXPRESSED STRONG CONCERNS ABOUT RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS, PARTICULARLY ON SALT. THEY HAVE ALSO EVIDENCED HERE SOME DISSATISFACTION ABOUT TRILATERALS ON MBFR AND INDICATIONS OF A "KEY ALLIES" OR DIRECTORATE APPROACH TO CONSULTATIONS. SOME HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST, BUT NOT CONCERN, REGARDING THE WASHINGTON TALKS ON THE HORN. IT IS DIFFICULT TO CALCULATE THE LEVEL OR IMPACT OF RESENTMENT WHICH IS NOT ALWAYS VOCALIZED, AND AT TIMES IS EXPRESSED ELSEWHERE.

2. RESENTMENT IS IMPORTANT, BECAUSE IT IS DEBILITATING FOR AN ALLIANCE. BUT JUST AS IMPORTANT ARE LONG RANGE US INTERESTS IN THE EVOLVING INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH OUR EC AND NATO ALLIES. IT SEEMS TO US THAT DECISIONS ON RESTRICTED GROUPINGS ARE MADE ON AN AD HOC BASIS, WHENEVER THE NEED ARISES. YET, THESE AD HOC DECISIONS HAVE,

CUMULATIVELY, A POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. THE EASE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS SHOULD NOT BE THE ONLY CONFIDENTIAL

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CRITERIA.

3. ALL THE ALLIES RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO CONSULT WITH RESTRICTED GROUPS ON SELECTED ISSUES. GAINING SUPPORT OF MAJOR ALLIES BEFORE BRINGING ISSUES TO THE FIFTEEN IS A TIME-HONORED AND ACCEPTED PROCEDURE IN NATO. ALL THE ALLIES PLAY THE GAME WHEN IT SUITS THEM.

4. AT THE SAME TIME, SMALLER ALLIES WILL BE SENSITIVE TO THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSISTENT PATTERN IN WHICH KEY DISCUSSIONS ON KEY ISSUES ARE HELD AMONG THE SELECT FEW. A SENSE OF ALLIANCE SOLIDARITY AND PARTICIPATION IS IMPORTANT TO THE MIDDLE AND SMALLER COUNTRIES. THEIR WILLINGNESS TO STAND UP TO SOVIET PRESSURE IS NOT UNRELATED TO THIS SENSE. THE ENTIRE ALLIANCE IS WEAKENED WHEN, OWING TO A FEELING OF HAVING BEEN EXCLUDED, THE SMALLER MEMBERS BECOME LESS CERTAIN OF US SUPPORT AND FEEL MORE EXPOSED TO SOVIET PRESSURES.

5. THUS WE BELIEVE IT IS NOT IN THE US INTEREST TO ENGAGE IN A PERSISTENT PATTERN OF RESTRICTED DISCUSSIONS. THE US SHOULD CONSIDER HOW BEST TO BALANCE THE LEGITIMATE NEED FOR INTIMATE TALKS WITH THE EQUALLY IMPORTANT REQUIREMENT TO INSURE THAT ALL ALLIES PARTICIPATE IN THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THEM. WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:

- (A) AS A RULE THE FIFTEEN SHOULD BE THE LOCUS OF CONSULTATION ON SECURITY AND EAST-WEST ISSUES. USE OF RESTRICTED PROCEDURES SHOULD BE THE EXCEPTION.

- (B) WE SHOULD AVOID SETTING UP A STANDING
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PATTERN OF RESTRICTED "DIRECTORATE" MEETINGS ON SENSITIVE TOPICS SUCH AS SALT AND CW.

- (C) WHEN RESTRICTED MEETINGS ARE HELD, WE SHOULD INSURE THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS AGREE THAT ALL ALLIES WILL BE INCLUDED AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE. RATHER

THAN HOLDING A LONG SERIES OF RESTRICTED MEETINGS,
WHICH LEAVE THE SMALL ALLIES IN THE DARK, INTERSPERSE
RESTRICTED MEETINGS WITH CONSULTATION AT FIFTEEN.

- (D) FACE UP TO THE LIKELIHOOD OF LEAKS. IT IS
BETTER TO TELL ALL ALLIES IN GENERAL TERMS ABOUT
RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS, RATHER THAN LETTING THEM
LEARN ABOUT THEM FROM THE PRESS OR FROM EACH OTHER.
WE SHOULD VOLUNTEER AT LEAST ENOUGH INFORMATION TO
AVOID THE IMPRESSION WE ARE TRYING TO HIDE SOMETHING.
PUBLIC REFERENCES TO "KEY ALLIES" SHOULD BE AVOIDED.

- (E) WASHINGTON SHOULD CONSIDER THE INTERESTS
OF SMALLER ALLIES AT THE OUTSET. WHEN BILATERAL
OR RESTRICTED DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDERTAKEN IT MIGHT
BE POSSIBLE, MORE OFTEN THAN IN THE PAST, TO ELICIT
THE VIEWS OF SMALLER ALLIES THROUGH OUR EMBASSIES.

B. CONSULTATIONS AT FIFTEEN:

6. THE "RULE" OF CONSULTATIONS AT FIFTEEN PROTECTS
THE RIGHT OF THE US TO INSIST THAT AN ISSUE IS OF
CONCERN TO THE ALLIANCE AND SHOULD BE DISCUSSED
AT FIFTEEN (E.G., NORWEGIAN DECISION ON FRG PARTICIPATION
IN EXERCISES, NON-CBMS ASPECTS OF CSCE). TO THE
DEGREE THE US FOSTERS LIMITED ALLIED GROUPINGS

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----108531 211745Z /41

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FM USMISSION USNATO
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EXDIS

THE US OPENS THE PROSPECT FOR OTHERS TO ISOLATE ISSUES
FROM US INFLUENCE BY BUILDING THEIR OWN LITTLE GROUPS.
SMALLER ALLIES USUALLY LEND SUPPORT WHEN THE US WANTS
TO MAKE AN ISSUE ALLIANCE BUSINESS IN ORDER TO INFLUENCE

ALLIED DECISIONS. AND COOPERATION WITH THE SMALLER ALLIES IN THIS ENDEAVOR SHOULD, IN THE US INTEREST, BE A TWO-WAY STREET.

7. SUCH CONSULTATIONS REINFORCE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND MILITARY COHERENCE OF THE ALLIANCE. THEY OBVIATE CONCERNS ABOUT A BONN-WASHINGTON AXIS. THEY ALSO ENTAIL PRACTICAL BENEFITS OF PLACING ALLIED VIEWS AND DOCUMENTS AT THE DISPOSAL OF ALL MEMBERS SO THAT:

- (A) ALLIED BUSINESS IS NOT CONDUCTED IN A MULTIPLICITY OF ONLY PARTIALLY OVERLAPPING GROUPS;
- (B) ALLIES ARE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT WHICH ARE NOT IN ON SECRETS, WHICH CANNOT BE TOLD WHAT IS GOING ON, AND WHICH NEED TO BE PROBED TO FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING;
- (C) INTERRELATED ALLIED DISCUSSIONS (AND FEW CONFIDENTIAL

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ISSUES ARE DISCRETE) CAN FLOW SMOOTHLY AMONG DIFFERENT FORA AND LEVELS OF DISCUSSION.

C. LIMITED GROUPS AT NATO:

8. IN THE NATO CONTEXT, THERE ARE SEVERAL STANDING COMMITTEES WITH LIMITED MEMBERSHIP, INCLUDING THE NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP, THE NATIONAL ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS (NADS), THE EUROGROUP, AND THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN PIPELINE COMMITTEE. EACH HAS ITS OWN JUSTIFICATION AND HISTORY. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN SOME INTEREST IN BROADER PARTICIPATION IN THE NPG, NONE OF THESE GROUPS HAS RAISED RESENTMENT OR SUGGESTIONS FOR RESTRUCTURING.

9. THERE ARE ALSO OPEN-ENDED GROUPS ON SUCH ISSUES AS GREECE-NATO RELATIONS, AND AID TO PORTUGAL AND TURKEY. THE OPEN-ENDED FORMAT HAS THE ADVANTAGE FOR AD HOC PROBLEMS OF PERMITTING ALL INTERESTED ALLIES TO PARTICIPATE WITHOUT IMPOSING ADDITIONAL BURDENS ON SMALLER DELEGATIONS.

10. WITHIN NATO, WE SEE NO AREAS NOW WHERE ADDITIONAL LIMITED GROUPINGS MIGHT BE USEFUL. IN GENERAL, WE AND OTHERS OPPOSE A PROLIFERATION OF COMMITTEES, AND TRY AT TIMES TO ABOLISH ATROPHIED GROUPS. WHEN DEVELOPMENTS DICTATE A NEED FOR RESTRICTED CONSULTATIONS, THE SYSTEM IS USUALLY FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE

THEM. TACTICS AND COMPOSITION HAVE TO BE TAILORED TO THE IMMEDIATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

D. THE FRENCH:

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11. THE FRENCH STANCE IS AT TIMES A CENTRAL ELEMENT IN US DECISIONS ON LIMITED CONSULTATIONS OUTSIDE NATO. IN RECENT YEARS THE FRENCH HAVE (A) SOUGHT TO ASSERT CONSTRAINTS ON THOSE NATO CONSULTATIONS THAT, OVER TIME, EXPANDED IN A FASHION VIEWED BY PARIS AS INCONSISTENT WITH NATO'S APPROPRIATE ROLE, WHILE (B) INSURING FRENCH SECURITY AND DERIVING MILITARY BENEFITS FROM THE ALLIANCE. FRENCH OBJECTIVES IN EUROPEAN AND TRANSATLANTIC CONSULTATIONS ARE DIFFERENT FROM AND PARTLY ADVERSE TO OUR OWN. THEY INCLUDE LONG-STANDING GOALS OF EXCLUDING US INFLUENCE IN CERTAIN AREAS, WHILE USING PRIVILEGED CONSULTATIONS WITH THE US AND OTHER ALLIES TO ENHANCE FRENCH LEVERAGE. OVERRIDING US INTERESTS TOWARD FRANCE MUST BE BALANCED, WHEN PROBLEMS ARISE, WITH US INTERESTS TOWARD THE ALLIANCE AND TOWARD THE INTEGRITY OF THE BROADER CONSULTATIVE PROCESS IN DECIDING ON (A) AD HOC EFFORTS TO MEET FRENCH CONCERNS, (B) NARROWING NATO CONSULTATIONS IN LINE WITH FRENCH INSISTENCE, (C) MARSHALING THE WEIGHT OF OTHER ALLIES TO MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE CONSULTATIONS AT FIFTEEN.

E. NATO, THE NINE, AND CSCE:

12. IN OUR VIEW, THE US SHOULD SUPPORT DEVELOPING POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE NINE, AND ACTIVE EXCHANGES THROUGH THE PRESIDENCY, WHILE MAINTAINING . THE FOCUS OF CONSULTATION ON EAST-WEST ISSUES AMONG THE FIFTEEN AT NATO.

13. EAST-WEST POLITICAL ISSUES ARE INTERTWINED WITH ALLIED SECURITY CONCERNS, AND CONSULTATIONS ON THEM IS RELEVANT TO ALLIED ATTITUDES TOWARD SECURITY

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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EXDIS

DECISIONS AND MILITARY PLANNING. TO THE DEGREE THAT CONSULTATIONS ON EAST-WEST ISSUES ARE FOCUSED HERE, THE US WILL BE FULLY INFORMED OF ALL ALLIED VIEWS FROM THE OUTSET, AWARE OF ANY DIFFERENCES AMONG ALLIES, AND IN A POSITION AT ALL STAGES OF DISCUSSION TO PRESENT ITS VIEWS, TO SPUR DECISIONS, AND TO MOLD CONSENSUS. THE VIEWS OF NON-EC MEMBERS, AND PARTICULARLY CANADA, GENERALLY REINFORCE US VIEWS ON EAST-WEST DEVELOPMENTS.

14. ON CSCE, WHERE THE NINE HAVE MADE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO CONCERT THEIR VIEWS, THE US HAS BEEN CONFRONTED WITH SOME POSITIONS, E.G. ON THE BREZHNEV PROPOSALS, AND PREPARATIONS FOR BELGRADE ON NON-CBMS ISSUES. HOWEVER, MOST MEMBERS OF THE NINE HAVE SOUGHT TO INSURE THAT THE NINE'S WORK ON CSCE DOVETAILS PRODUCTIVELY WITH CONSULTATIONS AT NATO. THE PROCESS OFTEN HAS WORKED WELL. BUT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT VIEWS OF INDIVIDUAL ALLIES ARE PRESENTED MORE SHARPLY IN THE NINE THAN AT NATO AND THAT THE FRENCH RESIST EFFORTS BY OTHERS TO BRING DOCUMENTS AND POSITIONS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FIFTEEN.

15. WE EXPECT FURTHER PROBLEMS IN THIS AREA, AND SEE
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NO READY SOLUTIONS. HOWEVER, IN LIGHT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CSCE IN EAST-WEST AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS, WE BELIEVE THE US SHOULD MAINTAIN PRESSURE FOR CONSULTATIONS AT FIFTEEN -- BEFORE DECISIONS ARE TAKEN, AND CONTINUE SUBSTANTIAL US CONTRIBUTIONS TO CSCE CONSULTATIONS AT FIFTEEN. IF THE PROCESS WORKS WELL, DISCUSSIONS AMONG THE NINE AND AT FIFTEEN WILL BE SO INTERTWINED THAT THE VIEWS OF ALL ALLIES WILL BE FULLY CONSIDERED BEFORE FINAL POSITIONS ARE SET IN EITHER FORUM.

F. COMPARTMENTALIZATION OF ECONOMIC AND DEFENSE
CONSULTATION:

16. ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, WE ARE NOT ABREAST OF EC POSITIONS AT THE OECD AND IN THE MTN, AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY COUNTER OR REINFORCE US OBJECTIVES. ONE ISSUE THAT HAS STRUCK US AT NATO, HOWEVER, IS THE IMPACT OF THE COMMUNITY, AND ESPECIALLY EC COMMISSION, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ON NATO ARMAMENTS STANDARDIZATION EFFORTS. A COMMISSION RULING TO PREVENT NATIDNAL EXEMPTION OF COMMON EXTERNAL TARIFF DUTIES ON IMPORTED MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND COMPONENTS COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT BELGIAN, DUTCH, AND DANISH IMPORTS FOR F-16 CO-PRODUCTION, AND NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND NATO MEMBER STATES ON ARMS PROCUREMENT MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING SUPPORTIVE OF STANDARDIZATION AND THE "TWO-WAY STREET."

17. THIS PROBLEM STEMS IN PART FROM THE COMPARTMENT-ALIZATION OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, AND NATIONAL AND ALLIANCE DEFENSE CONCERNS WITH WHICH THE COMMUNITY, AS SUCH, IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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DIRECTLY CONCERNED.

18. WE THINK IT WORTH EXPLORING WHETHER THE PRESENT US/EC (AND EC/NATO) CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS COULD BENEFIT FROM A NATO LIAISON ROLE, INFORMAL OR INSTITUTIONALIZED, WITH THE EC COMMISSION. THERE ARE OCCASIONAL LOW-KEY CONTACTS, LARGELY ON A PERSONAL BASIS, BETWEEN COMMISSION STAFF AND NATO INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT PERSONNEL ON ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN. BUT SENSITIVITIES OF VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS AND SECURITY REGULATIONS OF BOTH HAVE THUS FAR PREVENTED ANY REGULAR, COMPREHENSIVE INTERCHANGE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLIANCE, MEETING REPORTS, RELATIONS WITH REGIONAL ORGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USNATO001764
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780078-0341
Format: TEL
From: USNATO USEEC
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780231/aaaaazyt.tel
Line Count: 482
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5ec6b7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 9
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 38167
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3531316
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSULTATIONS WITH NATO ALLIES
TAGS: PORG, NATO, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5ec6b7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014